

## Job Description

<b>Post Title</b>	<b>Principal Accountant - HRA</b>
<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Finance</b>
<b>Team</b>	<b>Financial Planning</b>
<b>Grade</b>	<b>G (£42,821 - £45,857)</b>
<b>Reports to</b>	<b>Deputy Chief Finance Officer</b>
<b>Date prepared</b>	<b>25 November 2019</b>

### Job Purpose

1. To be the HRA financial expert and manage the Council's HRA Business Plan, take responsibility for financial reporting and budgeting in relation to all Housing activities, including housing investment and development activity and rent setting processes.
2. To ensure the maintenance and development of the HRA Business Plan model in line with corporate forecasting strategies, systems and practices.
3. To contribute to the development and continuous improvement of medium- and long-term financial forecasting within the Council and specifically in relation to Housing activity.
4. To support strategic decision making through delivering financial information to the Housing management team and providing cohesive, congruent and long-term commercial advice and business solutions to achieve housing business plans and objectives.
5. To analyse government announcements and policy statements to ensure that financial implications are captured and reflected within financial forecasting projections.
6. To actively support the Chief Finance Officer in her section 151 duties and undertake ad-hoc and specific projects in support of both the Director of Regeneration and Planning and Deputy Chief Finance Officer as and when required.

## Key Tasks

7. To monitor the political, economic, social and technical context that affects Housing and the HRA. Take account of these factors in strategic and operational plans.
8. Revisit and update the HRA Business Plan and associated plans at least at quarterly intervals and support the growth of a strong capital base for the directorate to ensure a sustainable development pipeline.
9. Monitor and report underpinning assumptions and produce sensitivity analysis and options. Reflect associated risks including impact of welfare reforms, rent arrears, Right To Buy levels.
10. Feed into the performance management agenda, including void levels, rent performance, volume of responsive repairs, movement in costs and other local factors; highlight implications. Support client contracting through provision of financial and performance data.
11. Revisit and update HRA Business Plan and associated development activity at least at quarterly intervals. Monitor and report underpinning assumptions and produce sensitivity analysis and options.
12. Ensure that the HRA Business Plan is reported on a regular basis through CMT and Cabinet to inform the medium-term financial position of the Council, including reports on budgeting, funding, borrowing and repayment position.
13. Lead on rent setting and modelling, including affordable rents and advise on low cost home ownership schemes.
14. Lead on the year end process in relation to the HRA accounts, ensure compliance with all technical standards and monitor the links between the General Fund and HRA and highlight any implications arising.
15. To contribute as required to the development and maintenance of further financial models, corporate forecasting strategies, systems and practices. Ensure that information is held in an interactive and intuitive medium, and scenario modelling can be undertaken.
16. To analyse government announcements, funding settlements and policy statements to ensure that financial implications are captured and reflected within financial forecasting projections. Ensure that legislative changes, public sector expectations and funding allocations are financially appraised, statutory requirements have been met and income has been maximised and correctly accounted.
17. Be aware of and propose development and funding initiatives and capitalise on external funding opportunities.

18. Actively support the Deputy Chief Finance Officer to undertake ad-hoc and specific projects as and when required and assist in the development of housing strategies and corporate financial policies and strategies.
19. Manage key relationships with internal clients and stakeholders, development partners, investors and local authorities on Housing related items.

### **Corporate Accountabilities**

20. To promote equality of opportunity in service delivery in line with strategic commitment and corporate policies.
21. To promote a culture that is supportive of the Councils' purpose, aims and values, and to take all reasonable steps to maintain good employee relations.
22. Staff are encouraged to participate fully in promoting a safety culture to protect the safety and health of themselves, colleagues and other people affected by the Councils' activities.
23. To understand and apply the Councils' Data Protection and Data Quality policy and procedures.
24. Any other duties commensurate with the nature of the post.
25. Deputise for Deputy Chief Finance Officer and cover absence of other team leaders as appropriate.
26. You will be required to support the Councils' corporate priorities and to ensure business continuity e.g. emergency response, elections, deployment to critical services.
27. Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough Councils' are committed to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk. The Corporate Safeguarding Policy and Procedures provides a framework within the Councils, setting out responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk.  
  
The policy applies to all employees, councillors, volunteers and service providers that are commissioned by the council.
28. To work within the Councils' Management and Core Competencies Framework(s). Central to the delivery of the role are the values and behaviours set out below. These are shared by all employees and applied to everything we do. The bullet points for each competency are examples of performance required:

## Core Competencies

Sharing the Vision - Shaping the Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands the Councils' purpose, context, goals, objectives and values, and is willing to behave consistently with them.</li> <li>• Knows the strategic direction of the Councils and acts in support of it.</li> </ul>
Communicating Well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributes to and participates in an organisation where high quality information flows smoothly both internally and externally.</li> <li>• Works positively to gain understanding from others.</li> </ul>
Driving Improvement Performance &Results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes responsibility and ownership for decisions, actions and results.</li> <li>• Takes actions to improve skills, knowledge and level of contribution.</li> <li>• Seeks and delivers high standards for self, team and Council</li> </ul>
Self-Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-motivated and professional.</li> <li>• Is organised and uses time and technology efficiently.</li> <li>• Adopts a flexible approach to change</li> </ul>
Delivering for our Customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a desire to identify and give priority to meeting and exceeding the needs of internal and external customers, generating high levels of customer satisfaction</li> </ul>
Working Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively contributes to team working, sharing information, valuing the input of others.</li> <li>• Works co-operatively and is committed to building, productive, positive relationships.</li> <li>• Demonstrates commitment to achieving overall team objectives</li> </ul>

## Management Competencies

Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspires and engenders commitment in others.</li> <li>• Leads from the front and by example.</li> <li>• Presents a united corporate view.</li> </ul>
Managing and Developing Performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaches and supports individuals and teams to perform at their best, motivating and developing them to achieve high performance.</li> </ul>
Managing Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensures the Councils' priorities are achieved through planned action programmes.</li> <li>• Makes best use of resources, ensuring value for money</li> </ul>
Managing change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embraces, facilitates, implements and manages change to improve and develop services</li> </ul>

**This job description sets out the duties of the post at the time it was drawn up. Such details will vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility involved.**

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### QUALIFICATIONS

<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CCAB qualified, or finalist or qualified by experience with extensive track record of mid to senior level management.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Management qualification</li><li>• Membership of appropriate professional body e.g. CIPFA, or other CCAB body.</li></ul>

### TRAINING

<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Financial systems</li><li>• Microsoft Outlook, Excel, Word and Microsoft PowerPoint</li><li>• Financial reporting systems</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Civica Financials</li><li>• Business Objects</li></ul>

### SKILLS & ABILITIES

<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to analyse complex information, focussing on the key financial drivers</li><li>• Ability to explain financial information effectively to staff with a non-financial background.</li><li>• Able to influence directors and members as appropriate</li><li>• Ability to influence, persuade and negotiate at a high level in order to facilitate critical decisions being reached.</li><li>• Ability to understand and translate complex issues into timely and innovative solutions.</li><li>• A flexible and challenging disposition.</li><li>• Excellent communication skills</li><li>• Very high financial and management accounting skills</li><li>• Strong Team player</li><li>• Ability to build positive relationships with colleagues at all levels.</li><li>• Initiative</li><li>• Ability to deal with personnel and sensitive work confidentially.</li><li>• Ability to prioritise, meet deadlines and</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Politically aware and sensitive</li><li>• A creative and innovative approach</li><li>• Strong motivational abilities</li><li>• Experience of managing staff members, preferably extending to management of a small team.</li></ul>

<p>work effectively under pressure, without direct supervision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very good written and verbal communication skills, including report writing and presentation skills</li> <li>• To act with dignity when representing the Council</li> <li>• Resourceful, innovative organised and IT literate</li> </ul>	
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## KNOWLEDGE

<p><b>Essential</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substantial knowledge of <b>local government and housing finance</b> and professional accounting requirements;</li> <li>• Knowledge of requirements of Internal and External Audit;</li> <li>• Understanding of the internal and external political environment within a local authority context;</li> <li>• Strong IT knowledge and experience of dealing with financial systems.</li> <li>• Understanding of CIPFA's Service Expenditure Code of Practice</li> <li>• Understanding of preparation and interpretation of Financial Appraisals</li> <li>• Use of computerised financial information systems and tools</li> </ul>	<p><b>Desirable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An understanding of capital financing and capital accounting.</li> <li>• An understanding of treasury management and treasury management accounting.</li> <li>• Knowledge of social housing in the public sector</li> </ul>
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## EXPERIENCE

<p><b>Essential</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of local authority housing finance e.g. <b>Housing Revenue Account</b></li> <li>• Strong experience in accountancy, including budgeting, monitoring, reconciliations, financial modelling and end of year reporting</li> <li>• Proven ability to manage and deliver a demanding workload</li> <li>• Management of finance staff</li> <li>• Management experience at both an operational and a strategic level</li> <li>• Experience of board level participation and membership</li> </ul>	<p><b>Desirable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience in a local authority or private sector financial environment with experience producing the Accounts, as appropriate</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful delivery of VFM and Successful delivery of a governance and a control framework in support of performance improvements</li> </ul>	
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**PHYSICAL, LEGAL AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works within the Councils' Core Competency and Management Frameworks</li> <li>• An engaging, enthusiastic and positive manner with a strong "can do" approach</li> <li>• Be occasionally available to work additional hours outside of normal working hours</li> <li>• Ability to travel to Lewes and Eastbourne</li> <li>• Willingness to develop skills and knowledge in other areas to provide flexibility within the service</li> <li>• Flexible approach to work by responding to the needs of the services including, at times, requirements to work beyond normal working hours</li> <li>• Commitment to own continuous personal and professional development</li> <li>• Strong team player, committed to an ethos of continuous improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full driving license</li> <li>• Evidence of own continuous personal and professional development</li> </ul>

***All staff must be prepared to have an understanding of the Equal Opportunities, Customer Care and Health and Safety policies. Managers in particular, must have a commitment to implement and abide by these policies.***